

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 DACCA 02495 220542Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00  
PA-02 ICA-20 SP-02 AID-05 /050 W  
-----012455 220546Z /62

P R 220450Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8981  
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
CINCPAC

UNCLAS DACCA 2495

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS : PGOV, PINT, BG  
SUBJECT : ZIA ANNOUNCE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

1. PRESIDENT ZIA ANNOUNCED IN A RADIO AND TELEVISION SPEECH LAST NIGHT (APRIL 21) THAT A PRESIDENTIAL POLL WILL BE HELD JUNE 3 AND THAT OPEN POLITICS WOULD BE ALLOWED "IN PHASES" BEGINNING APRIL 24. ZIA ALSO REAFFIRMED THAT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD BY NEXT DECEMBER AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT "THE NATION THROUGH THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF ALL WILL ESTABLISH A DECENT TRADITION BY CONDUCTING THE PRESIDENTIAL AND GENERAL ELECTIONS SMOOTHLY."

2. WITHOUT DIRECTLY SAYING SO, ZIA LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR HIS OWM POLITICAL PLATFORM BY DISCUSSING SOME OF THE BASIC NEEDS OF A NEW GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE. HE SAID THAT THE CONSTITUTION WOULD BE IN NEED "OF SUCH PROVISIONS WHEREIN THE PRESIDENT CAN EXERCISE THE POWER AND EXECUTE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE...SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE SOVEREIGN PARLIAMENT AND INDEPE-  
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DENT JUDICIARY." HE SAID A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WILL HAVE TO AID AND ASSIST THE PRESIDENT AND A PRIME MINISTER WILL HAVE TO DISCHARGE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

3. ZIA OBSERVED THAT NO FORM OF GOVERNMENT, WHETHER PRESIDENTIAL OR PARLIAMENTARY, COULD BE CALLED PERFECT IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES; THE NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH COUNTRY WOULD DETERMINE WHAT

IS NECESSARY. IN THE CASE OF BANGLADESH, ONE-PARTY RULE AS ESTABLISHED BY THE FOURTH AMENDMENT HAD BEEN FOUND WANTING. ZIA REMINDED THE NATION THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY ALLOWED POLITICAL PARTIES TO BE ESTABLISHED AND THAT "NECESSARY AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION WILL BE INTRODUCED IN DUE COURSE" TO ALLOW THE PRESIDENT TO RUN THE STATE MACHINERY WHILE PROTECTS THE SOVEREIGNTY OF PARLIAMENT.

4. ZIA SAID THAT HE HAD WIDE-RANGING TALKS WITH MANY POLITICIANS OVER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLITICAL FRONT AND HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT DISCUSSIONS WERE STILL UNDERWAY. HE GAVE NO INDICATION WHY A FRONT HAD NOT YET BEEN FORMED BUT INSTEAD CONCLUDED HIS SPEECH BY SAYING THAT IT WAS HIS FIRM CONVICTION THAT ALL PATRIOTIC AND DEMOCRATICALLY-MINDED PARTIES WOULD COME FORWARD TO CONSOLIDATE THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH THE FORMATION OF A NATIONALIST FRONT.  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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